

WOMEN OF THE REPRODUCTIVE  
RIGHTS MOVEMENT

SPEECH OF

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 29, 2022*

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the countless people—organizers and activists, jurists and justices, doctors and clinic staff—whose work and leadership continues to secure access to abortion services across the country. For generations, women have been at the forefront of the fight to secure reproductive health services, and their bravery and vision continues to inspire our work today. In the face of the most serious effort to turn back the clock on abortion access in decades, their work is more important today than ever.

Around the country, medical providers and clinic staff show up to work every day to ensure that people have the care they need. They routinely provide care in the face of unrelenting threats, violence, and harassment by anti-abortion extremists, showing up each day to ensure that people in our communities have access to care. These providers and clinic staff have been innovating and adapting to meet an unending series of challenges and hurdles. Each day, abortion care providers are working toward a world in which every person can shape their own futures and families.

I want to share some of their names here today—just some of the many women whose work is critical to making abortion accessible.

Dr. Kathryn Fay, MD/MSCI, is on the faculty in the Division of Complex Family Planning at Brigham and Women's hospital, an instructor at Harvard Medical School, and is an NIH-funded researcher focusing on reproductive coercion. She continues to provide a full spectrum of care, including labor and delivery services, medication and procedural abortions, contraceptive counseling, and routine gynecologic care.

Dr. Halley Crissman is an OB/GYN in Southeast Michigan who provides gender-affirming care, abortion care, and comprehensive sexual and reproductive care. Dr. Crissman advocates tirelessly for her patients—for their access to safe, high quality medical care, and for their respect and bodily autonomy. She is the Director of Gender Affirming Care with Planned Parenthood of Michigan which is working to expand access to gender-affirming hormone care across the state of Michigan, while simultaneously working to protect and expand access to abortion care.

Dr. Katherine Farris has worked at Planned Parenthood South Atlantic for more than 13 years. She is a family physician who has provided abortion care throughout her career because she recognizes that without the ability to decide if or when to become a parent, no person has true freedom or autonomy to create the life they desire.

Dr. Rathika Nimalendran works as an abortion provider at a health clinic in North Carolina. In a profile for Physicians for Reproductive Health, she wrote "I have always been compelled to provide abortion care. I believe in a woman's right to choose what is best for her, and I provide abortions to help women who have made the choice to safely terminate a pregnancy."

Joan Whitaker retired as the director of health services at ABCD (Action for Boston Community Development) in June 2020 after serving the Boston community for 33 years.

Dr. Adeola Oni-Orisan is a medical anthropologist and board-certified family physician specializing in reproductive healthcare. She provides abortion care in California and also travels to Georgia to provide abortions as interim-medical director of abortion services at Planned Parenthood Southeast. As a medical anthropologist, her work seeks to illuminate experiences of seeking and providing reproductive health care in Black birthwork communities in the bay area. She is also a leader in One Love Black Community, an organization which supports Black birthing people in San Francisco who are pregnant, postpartum, or postabortion.

Madam Speaker, abortion is essential, abortion providers are essential, and independent abortion clinics do essential work. Many also provide other life-saving services, including hormone therapy and gender-affirming care, prenatal and birthing care, STI and HIV testing and treatment, birth control and family planning, and sometimes even primary care. We celebrate each of these women today, together with doctors and nurses, clinic staff and administrators, across the country.

In addition to medical professionals and clinic staff, we also honor the women whose work as advocates, activists, and organizers is critical to ensuring that each person has access to the care they need. Women who have fought for the passage of laws that protect, rather than restrict, abortion access, have advocated for funding for reproductive health priorities; women who go into communities to coordinate and educate, and to connect people with the care and services they seek. Women who ensure we all know what our rights are, and who teach us to raise our voices to demand the protection of those rights.

I particularly want to pay tribute to the women who have been working on the ground in Texas, especially in the months since the enactment of S.B. 8. In the light of unprecedented restrictions and draconian new laws, organizers and activists in Texas have persisted, and their work is more critical now than ever.

I want to highlight one organizer today: Lucy Ceballos Felix. Lucy, originally from Matamoros, Tamaulipas; Mexico, is certified by the state of Texas as a Community Health Worker (CHW) and Community Health Worker Instructor (CHWI). Since 2012, Lucy has worked at the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice as Associate Director of Field and Advocacy in Texas, meeting with groups of women and other from various cities in the four counties of the Rio Grande Valley, Corpus Christi, and Houston. Her work helps community groups learn how to discover and develop their leadership, mobilize their community, and take action on political issues that are harming their lives, families, and communities. In the light of recent Texas legislation, Lucy's work is needed now more than ever.

I could speak for hours about the women who paved the legal path that is now under threat from the Supreme Court and the women who, as legislators at both the state and national level, have fought for passage of bills that expand abortion access and refused to accept policies that put it farther out of reach. I want to close by paying tribute to just one—Rep. Shirley Chisholm.

Rep. Chisholm was a trailblazer in so many ways, and not the least of these was her support for reproductive rights and abortion access. In 1969 she was named honorary president of NARAL, in 1970 she supported legalization of abortion in her home state of New York, and in 1970 described abortion as an issue of economic and racial justice. In 1989, she was one of 16 Black women who published the first collective statement calling for equal access to abortion. Rep. Chisholm emphasized what continues to be true today: that although abortion restrictions and bans hurt everyone, their impacts fall most heavily on women of color, low-income women, and others who already face barriers to accessing health care. Rep. Chisholm understood that reproductive justice is critical to economic and racial justice, and I am proud to continue her work as co-chair of the Pro-Choice Caucus.

Madam Speaker, every day across the United States and around the world, women are protecting, upholding, and expanding abortion access. Generations of women—lawyers, organizers, providers, activists, volunteers—are responsible the rights and freedoms we currently enjoy, and the Pro-Choice Caucus is committed to building upon their legacy. Even in the face of unprecedented threats, we will continue to fight for a future where everyone, no matter where they live or how much money they make, has the freedom to make decisions, for themselves, about their bodies, their lives, and their futures.

FREYA ARCHULETA

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 1, 2022*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Freya Archuleta for receiving the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award.

Freya Archuleta is a 9th grader at Adams City High School and received this award because their determination and hard work have allowed them to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Freya Archuleta is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Freya Archuleta for winning the Adams County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award. I have no doubt they will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of their future accomplishments.

WESTMINSTER RETIREMENT  
COMMUNITY 55TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, April 1, 2022*

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the 55th anniversary of the opening of the Westminster Retirement Community in Austin, Texas. I wish to congratulate them for